

**Town of Arlington  
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Tuesday, February 22, 2005  
November 16, 2004 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Jeff Maxtutis, Lt. Jim McHugh, Kevin O'Brien, Mike Rademacher, RonJohn SanSantosuossochez, Scott Smith, Ed Starr

Others present: Stephen Makowka, Peter Szerlag  
Visitors: Peter Szerlag, Chris Leich

**1. The minutes of 1/250/26/20054 were approved unanimously.**

**2. Public Comment**

Peter Szerlag had two suggestions:

- Flashing sign on Park Ave. northbound warning of Downing square
- One resident of Winslow towers complained that the Walk/Don't Walk signs in Arlington Center are difficult to see. Lt. McHugh noted that we are in the process of moving from incandescent to LED.

Stephen Makowka had several comments on Russell Terrace area

- He noted that the Board of Selectmen voted the recommendations back in January 2003
- Improvements to Russell Terrace and the Winslow Street intersection are planned for next spring. We need to make sure the recommendations are incorporated.
- Residents are pleasantly surprised by the apparently modest traffic impact of Russell Place, but it may be wise to do traffic counts again.
- Revisit alternate side parking on Russell Street with the neighbors.

John Sanchez arrived at this point.

**4. Snow Emergency Issues**

Scott Smith presented a draft plan for one-side parking during snowy conditions. Issues included getting the word out and enforcement. It was noted that our current options now are either to keep the current parking regulations or to declare a snow emergency with no on street parking at all. This plan is intended to deal with the period between 1 day and a week or so after a major snowstorm, where some parking needs to be permitted (so that customers can access businesses) but many streets are not yet wide enough to permit parking on both sides.

It was agreed to try it on a voluntary basis first, with John Sanchez, Jim McHugh and Scott Smith to work out the details of the plan and how it should be publicized.

**2. Downing Square**

Ron Santosuosso presented a cost estimate of approximately \$64,000 for doing the work. This does not include repaving. Suggestions included:

- International design on the crosswalks
- Using one raised crosswalk (the uncontrolled crosswalk on Park Ave) rather than six.

There was some discussion of the right turn from Lowell to Bow. Making it one-way might work, but compliance could be an issue.

There was some discussion of funding. The developer of the site at the intersection may be able to make a small contribution. For Arlington's capital budget, we are looking at FY 2008.

Ron indicated that the ideal time to start with the mockup (sandbags and portable speed hump) would be in late April/early May. We agreed that next steps would include the following:

- Bring a preview of the plan to Jack Hurd, and then bring it to the Board of Selectmen within the next 6 to 8 weeks.
- Obtain the portable raised device (Recycled Technology)
- Start work on obtaining funding for the final implementation.

### **3. Churchill Avenue**

Mike Rademacher presented the recommendations. Scott Smith asked about visibility at Churchill and Endicott. Mike replied that it is sufficient for the driver on Endicott who stops at the intersection, but is limited enough so as to make it prudent for a motorist to stop. The following recommendations were voted unanimously:

1. Spot speed enforcement and radar speed sign on Churchill
2. Stop sign and stop bar for the Endicott Road approach.
3. Advance stop ahead sign on Churchill SB at Wildwood, and stop bars at all existing stop sign locations.

### **4. East Arlington Parking Study**

Scott Smith reported that about 60 people, mostly residents, attended the public meeting. Additional meetings are planned in Police, Fire and business representatives.

### **5. Crosswalk working group**

Ed Starr asked that the group be resurrected to make recommendations on the next round of thermoplastic crosswalks. Scott Smith suggested that candidates would include the busiest streets that have not been done already (Route 60 and Summer Street), as well as widening the original 7 on Mass Ave. It was suggested that the controlled crosswalks on Mass. Ave. also be included. Elisabeth Carr Jones offered to contact Larry Englisher to see if he would attend a meeting. For the next round of thermoplastic, Ron Santosuosso indicated that he needs to know the locations by May 1. .

### **6. Crosswalk request: 1395 Mass. Ave**

The committee will be receiving a request for a crosswalk at 1395 Mass. Ave., near Sunrise Assisted Living.

### **7. Town Reports**

#### **Planning (Kevin O'Brien)**

For Symmes, the Special Permit process may proceed in two phases, with the first hearing being for the Medical building. A zoning change will have to go to Town Meeting and it is desirable for the Town to give up the old Hospital Road right-of-way.

Submissions for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are due by 3/1. Patricia Domigan of VHB is updating the entry for the Mass. Ave. corridor.

There have been some complaints from Reed Street residents about people parking there to use McClennen Park.

#### **DPW (Ron Santosuosso)**

The snow removal budget is in deficit. After the last major storm, some 15 cars were towed. Ron also reported that John Sanchez is phasing out chip seal in favor of overlay.

#### **Police (Lt. Jim McHugh)**

Pedestrian signal heads are being replaced with LED. Also, it appears that the signal detector loop was damaged at Lockeland and Mass Ave, but it is difficult to determine responsibility. Lt. McHugh offered to check whether the signal heads at Mass Ave and Appleton had been replaced with LEDs.

### **8. Library Way Crosswalk**

After a brief discussion of the library way crosswalk, Ed Starr asked if a volunteer could come forward to lead the working group. Points in the discussion included the following:

- Move the crosswalk a bit further west to improve visibility, and possibly better match pedestrian crossing patterns?
- No left turn?
- Signal?

### **9. New Members**

Ralph Elwell reported that the Board of Selectmen appointed Chuck Pappas as the Chamber of Commerce representative. We have 6 citizen applications. Next actions include

- Have coffee with Chuck Pappas (Ralph/Ed)
- Prepare new members booklets (Ed)
- Schedule interviews (Ralph/Jack/Ed)

### **10. Sustainable Arlington**

Scott Smith reported that he and Elisabeth Carr Jones had submitted comments on the transportation portion of the Sustainable Arlington action plan.

### **11. Capital Budgets**

Ed Starr reported on his conversation with Nancy Galkowski. Submissions to the capital plan should occur during the summer, and therefore would need to be voted during the June TAC meeting. He asked that we consider what items should be submitted.

### **12. Symmes**

Scott Smith indicated that he had estimated a worst-case approximate 40% share of residential traffic through the Woodside lane driveway if the access were kept open (but a much lower share of medical/office traffic). Summer Street queuing continues to be a concern.

### **13. Dallin School**

Jeff Maxtutis reported that TAC representatives (Jeff and Elisabeth) would be on the agenda for the Permanent Town Building Committee on 3/1. Our role is to educate PTBC and the School Committee on school access issues, an area of interest to many people. Next steps include

- Define where traffic counts are needed (Jeff/Elisabeth)
- Define where sidewalks are needed (Jeff/Elisabeth)
- Send letter to BoS with request, and schedule presentation at BoS meeting (Jeff/Elisabeth/Ed)

#### **14. Pleasant Street**

Lt. McHugh explained that the Town Manager had received a letter from Mass. Highway indicating non-concurrence with the proposed overnight truck ban on Pleasant Street. Stated reasons include the following:

- Route 60 is part of the National highway planning network
- No reasonable alternate route was provided.

Note that the actual text of the relevant portion of Chapter 149 of the 2004 Session Laws (taken from the State web site) is as follows:

“6010-0001

Department of Highways.

...provided further that said department is directed to close route 60 between state highway route 2 in the town of Arlington and Winthrop Circle, in the city of Medford to commercial traffic between the hours of 12 P.M. and 6 A.M effective September 1, 2004, unless the said department declares it a public necessity that said roadway should be open to commercial traffic...”

The committee agreed on the following actions:

- Send letters to trucking concerns that Ed Cuoco had identified, seeking their compliance with speed laws (Kevin)
- Examine the Rt 2 exit ramp to Pleasant north, with the idea of placing a stop sign (all).
- Put on agenda for next TAC meeting (Ed)

#### **15. Anne Lusk Grant**

Ed Starr offered to suggest that Anne Lusk write an article for the Advocate about her work.

#### **5. Churchill Avenue**

Ed Starr presented some speed and volume data. Mike Rademacher agreed to lead the working group. He and Lt. McHugh will contact the neighbors.

#### **6. Dallin School**

Elisabeth and Jeff presented the current plans for the new school. Issues identified by committee members included

- Connection between George St, and Renfrew St. in very poor condition
- Can pedestrian access be provided direct to Dow Avenue (along a paper street)?

#### **7. Board of Selectmen Meeting 11/8/2004**

Ed Starr reported on the Board of Selectmen meeting of 11/8/2004. Our recommendations on Cedar /Waverley/Renfrew were quickly voted, with words of praise for the report that Jeff Maxtutis prepared.

Our recommendations for Jason / Norfolk were also voted, although some neighbors objected to the relocation of the crosswalk and bus stop.

## **8. Symmes Subcommittee**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that the subcommittee had met with Patrick McMahon (Fish Associates) and Jane Howard (Howard/Stein-Hudson). The subcommittee is now dealing with the issue of the base volume on Summer Street, as previous studies had reported divergent numbers.

## **9. Downing Square and Traffic Calming**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones raised the question of whether the desire for traffic calming in the streets near Downing Square (for example, Lowell Street near the reservoir, and Park Avenue Extension near Peirce School) should be considered as part of the Downing Square process. Meanwhile, the Town Manager had requested that speed humps be put in on the street parallel to the bike path that connects Water Street and Mill Street. This street (really a parking area) is seeing some use as a cut through. Scott Smith noted that there already is precedence for traffic calming in a similar location (the parking area between Linwood Street and Lakehill Avenue in East Arlington). In addition to the long-standing speed bumps, speed humps were recently installed in this area.

Scott Smith recommended a two-pronged approach:

- Go ahead with the traffic calming on the street connecting Water and Mill. Given the parking and pedestrian traffic, this is meant to be an extremely low speed street. This effort might start with a raised crosswalk in the middle, supplemented by other speed humps.
- Meanwhile, develop decision criteria for other roads.

There was general agreement with this suggestion, except that the raised crosswalk might be overly expensive. Speed humps might be a better option.

Ed Starr suggested that we also obtain one of the portable devices from Recycled Technology, to do an experiment. He asked John Sanchez to obtain price information for the planned humps on the street connecting Water and Mill, and suggested that emergency services be involved in any planned experiments.

## **10. Department News**

Lt. McHugh reported that the Police Department has received permission to hire two additional officers.

## **11. Green Line Extension**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported on a meeting that she attended where the MBTA presented plans to add transit service between Lechmere and West Medford. Currently, the advisory committee has no Arlington representation although these plans could have an effect on Arlington. (For example, the planned route parallels existing bus route 80, a route that terminates in Arlington Center.)

The basic options (with some additional variations) are as follows:

- Extending the Green Line light rail along an existing commuter rail right of way from Lechmere to West Medford (variations include several diversions to Union Square, Somerville)

-Running a bus rapid transit line from Lechmere to West Medford.

Construction is still a number of years away, as funding has to be secured and a final design selected.

## **12. Mass. Ave Corridor**

Scott Smith reported that the kickoff meeting with VHB for the Mass Ave corridor study will be on 11/23 at 4 PM. On December 2nd, there will also be a public meeting in Belmont on the Trapelo Road redesign.

## **13. Route 60 / Mass Ave.**

Ed Starr reported that it was time for the working group to have another meeting. We will need decision criteria for choosing among the options. It appears that the signals can be interconnected with new controllers for about \$150K, a lower cost than expected. He asked committee members for feedback on the questions he had drafted for the Vision 2020 survey.

## **14. Staffing / New TAC member**

Ralph Elwell reported that we had one potential candidate for the at-large position, but had not heard from the Chamber of Commerce about their position. There was general agreement that the effort to find a new at-large member needed to be better publicized, and therefore we should keep the position open for a few more weeks. Ralph agreed to draft an announcement and to speak with Jack Hurd.

## **15. Member Choice: Jason / Norfolk**

John Sanchez reported that it might be possible to complete the move of the Jason/Norfolk crosswalk to Jason/Woodland during the next few weeks. Ed Starr, meanwhile, had suggested some changes to improve the visibility of the existing signage at the Jason/Norfolk crosswalk. It was unanimously voted/agreed that, if the crosswalk cannot be moved before the end of this month, that the Town implement Ed's recommendations. The recommendations were for the existing crosswalk at Norfolk: 1) place a lime-green crosswalk ahead sign on the first telephone pole after Gray St traveling southbound on Jason. 2) move the crosswalk signs for northbound traffic on Jason to before the tree that now blocks their visibility.

## **16 Lemelson**

Mike Rademacher reported that he had sent an e-mail to Jack Duranceau asking about the status of the project, but had not yet received a response.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:45:45 PM**

**Handouts:**

Agenda package including agenda, list of TAC projects and working groups, request from the Board of Selectmen for the Library Way crosswalk, status of actions from 10/26/2004, Churchill Avenue request and traffic counts, Jason/Norfolk pictures, and status of actions to be done, thoughts on Sustainable Arlington goals. – from Ed Starr

Minutes from 1/25/2005 – from Scott Smith

Cost estimate for Potential questions for Vision 2020 survey – from Ed Starr

Minutes from 10/26/2004, Census Transportation Planning Package journey-to-work data for Arlington, announcement of Trapelo Road meeting, and guidelines for snow emergency parking – from Scott Smith

Downing Square – from Ron Santosuossoallin School locus map and MBTA Beyond Lechmere options – from Elisabeth Carr Jones

Churchill Ave recommendations– from Mike Rademacher